

# **Annual Report 2011**



**State of New Hampshire**  
**Governor's Commission on Disability**  
57 Regional Drive  
Concord, NH 03301  
[www.nh.gov/disability](http://www.nh.gov/disability)

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December 31, 2011

Dear Governor Lynch:

On behalf of the New Hampshire Governor's Commission on Disabilities, it is our privilege to submit our annual report on the work of the Commission and staff from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011.

The Commission continued its efforts to help educate and inform New Hampshire residents and visitors on issues important to people with disabilities. Our e-newsletter is presently reaching over 600 recipients monthly. Partnering with others, the Governor's Accessibility Awards program was successfully initiated. This opportunity to recognize individuals and organizations that have gone over and above in providing accessibility to persons with disabilities is off to a great start.

Staff responded to numerous calls and emails from citizens, provided many instances of technical assistance, education and outreach and continued the Commission's ongoing efforts to track data related to the important service of technical assistance and support. Data collected allows us to direct our efforts into subject areas and issues where and when it is most needed. Within this report exact data is presented. It is important to note that in addition to staff activities, commission members participated throughout the year in their local communities by providing numerous instances of outreach and advocacy activities.

Our Accessibility Coordinators hosted and spoke at several presentations as well as reviewing numerous buildings for accessibility. Additionally, we worked in collaboration with the New England Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Center to bring high quality, targeted information on accessibility issues into New Hampshire.

We participated in the New Hampshire Emergency Preparedness initiative in an effort to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities will be supported in times of emergency.

The Governor's Commission continued its work with the NH Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (NHVR) and maintained membership in the National Association of Governor's Committees on People with Disabilities (NAGC). The Commission's executive director is a member of NHVR's State Rehabilitation Council, which has a legislated oversight and policy setting role for the VR program.

In addition, the Commission reviewed numerous bills during this Legislative Session, supporting numerous bills to enhance people with disabilities' full inclusion and access to community, work, and recreation in New Hampshire.

We have made an ongoing effort to be fiscally responsible and good stewards of tax dollars, having downsized our staff and streamlined our efforts whenever possible.

## **Looking Forward to 2012**

The staff and members of the Commission will continue to seek out new partnerships and collaborative relationships with all stakeholders in order to meet the goals of our mission. Additionally, we will explore ways to utilize technological solutions to reach out to a wider audience. The Commission will

be forward-thinking as it looks at research and data to develop its policy recommendations. We look forward to the opportunities and challenges of 2012.

The Commission and staff is appreciative of the support provided by you and your staff in our work with and for our residents and visitors with disabilities and respectfully submit our annual report. This has been an extremely challenging year, however we proudly report the successes and challenges while looking forward to 2012 and continuing our work with you, the legislature, and citizens toward a fully inclusive New Hampshire.

Sincerely,

John W. Richards, MSW, MBA  
Executive Director

## **History / Mission / Vision**

In 1978, RSA 275:C established the Governor's Commission on Disability, with the purpose of becoming a voice for the more than 190,000 New Hampshire citizens with disabilities, in all facets of life, including state government.

During 2011, the Commission engaged in a strategic planning process over the course of several meetings and struggled with a variety of challenging questions. The following Mission and Vision statements evolved:

### **MISSION**

To remove the barriers, [be they] architectural or attitudinal, which bar persons with disabilities from participating in the mainstream of society.

### **VISION**

New Hampshire – A state where disability doesn't matter and quality of life counts.

### **OUR TAG LINE**

The Voice of New Hampshire's Disability Community

## **Goals and Strategies**

The Governor's Commission's Strategic Plan was developed this year and is included in its entirety as Appendix A. The goals of the strategic plan are directly excerpted from the establishing legislation at RSA 275:C. The strategies were formed via a retreat process conducted by the Commission's members and staff.

## Commission Membership

From RSA 275:C:

“There is hereby established the governor's commission on disability which shall consist of 30 members appointed by the governor. At least 15 commission members shall be persons with a disability or parents or guardians of persons with a disability. There shall be 20 members appointed from the general public and 10 shall be appointed from organizations which provide services for persons with disabilities. Each member of the commission shall serve, without compensation, for a 6 year term and until his successor is appointed and qualified, provided that of the initial members appointed hereunder, 10 shall serve for 2 years, 10 for 4 years and 10 for 6 years, as designated by the governor.”

The members of the Governor's Commission, as of 12/31/2011, are as follows:

Paul Van Blarigan CHAIRPERSON, Hollis

Marie-Helene Bailinson (Ex-Officio) or Zandy Dezonie, NH Employment Security, Concord

George Copadis (Ex-Officio), Dept of Labor, Concord

William Finn (Ex-Officio), Services For the Blind and Visually Impaired, Concord

Lisa Hatz (Ex-Officio), Interim Dir, VR Field Service Director, Dept of Ed– Voc Rehab, Concord

Nicholas Toumpas (Ex-Officio) or Kathleen Henderson, Health & Human Services, Concord

Margaret Case, Nottingham

Dee Clanton, Dept of Education Services Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Concord

Barry E. Conway, Commandant NH Veterans Home, Tilton

Bonnie A. Dunham, Merrimack

Jim Hinson, Coordinator Corp Relations NH DOE- VR, Concord

Carol Holmes, Derry

Ellen Keith, Tamworth

Joan Marcoux, MA, CRC, Bureau Of Elderly and Adult Services, Concord

Thomas Manning, Manchester

Edmund Meskys, Moultonborough

Mary E. Morin, Dir, Veterans Council, Manchester

Michael G. Paciello, Hudson

Karen Prive, Franklin

Dr. Melvin Prostkoff, Dover

Michael Racette, Manchester

Frederick Roberge, Easter Seal Society, Manchester

Clyde Terry, Ex. Dir., GSIL, Concord

Sandra Teti, E. Rochester

Guy Woodland, VP NHAB, McGreal Sight Center, Concord

## Organizational Structure

The Governor's Commission on Disability is governed by the commission itself, which is composed of 30 gubernatorial appointees who represent a broad range of individuals and organizations. The commission has an executive committee of three persons who are actively involved with oversight of activities. Day-to-day Operations of the commission are in turn managed by the Executive Director, John W Richards, MSW, MBA. The staff of the commission are as follows:

- Carol Conforti-Adams, Med, CRF: Information and Referral Specialist (I&R)
- Jillian Shedd, M Arch: Accessibility Coordinator (AB)
- Gayle Baird: Accountant and Human Resources Coordinator
- Bill Hagy: Ombudsman for the Client Assistance Program (CAP)
- Paula Ninivaggi - Statewide Independent Living Coordinator (SILC)
- Sally Creighton: SCSEP volunteer
- as of this writing, our Clerk Interviewer/Receptionist position is vacant

## Finances

The Governor's Commission on Disability (GCD), like the rest of the state's Agencies, operated under incredible conditions due to the continued distressed economy. Staff rose to the challenge of covering the tasks and duties of personnel lost during this process. Staff were able to join forces and resources to comply with Federal and State statutes as well as Grant Mandates to get the jobs done. Our original budget appropriation was \$766,033 and after Reductions, Lapses and programmatic cuts, we wound up with \$568,587.67 in expenditures for the year.

Budget Summary:

Operating Costs	37,907.63
Program Costs	183,294.23
Personnel Costs	347,385.81
	<b>568,587.67</b>

## **Affiliated Programs**

### **Governor's Commission on Disability Joint Efforts**

#### **New Hampshire's Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)**

##### **“Working Together for Independent Living In New Hampshire”**

(Reporting Period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011)

The New Hampshire Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) is created in Title VII, of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The Council's members are appointed by the Governor. The Council is a cross-disability, statewide, volunteer council; representing the independent living needs of people with significant disabilities in New Hampshire. The mission is to provide leadership and advocacy in support of the independent living philosophy for persons with significant disabilities. The philosophy of independent living includes: individual control, peer support, self-help, and self-determination to maximize the independence, inclusion and productivity of people with disabilities.

While the SILC is housed in the Governor's Commission on Disability, it is fully funded by Federal resources from Title VII, by the NH Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation. The majority of SILC volunteer members have first hand knowledge of disabilities and services. This gives the SILC a broad knowledge of independent living services and gaps statewide. The SILC and the GCD work collaboratively on activities to improve the lives of citizens living with disabilities in New Hampshire. In 2011 the SILC increased the number of items contributed for publication in the GCD's weekly Union Leader newspaper column “Beyond the Barriers.” The column provides people living with disabilities and the general public information on community services, events, programs, trainings related to disability. In 2011 the SILC collaborated with the GCD in hosting presentations and trainings by AARP and the New Hampshire Red Cross. In 2011 the SILC collaborated with other agencies and disability entities on taskforces focused on: benefits, healthcare, and housing.

- **SILC Information and Resource Newsletter:**

The SILC produces a free electronic monthly Information and Resource Newsletter. This newsletter has information and resources for: people living with disabilities, families, agency staff, providers, the general public, etc. Topics include: mental health, housing, financial, health and wellness, recreation, disability awareness, disaster preparedness, transition, veterans, older adults, disability laws, employment, community resources substance abuse, assistive technology, bullying, education, events, trainings, and more. Reflecting the growing diversity of New Hampshire information on different cultures and languages is included in the SILC Newsletter.

Begun in 2008, the newsletter distribution list grew from 100 to over 1,000 statewide. Forwarding of the newsletter is estimated to be 3,000. The newsletter reaches: people living with disabilities, families, disability and health and human service organizations schools, libraries, community gathering places, businesses, town clerks, senior centers, state agencies, veteran's organizations, and more. The newsletter serves a basis for other groups' resource lists.



In 2011 the SILC received over 100 accolades on the Newsletter. The following are examples, of the helpfulness and positive impact on the lives of NH citizens the SILC Newsletter had in 2011.

"The SILC newsletter helps so many people by providing tips on healthy eating, recreation, disaster preparedness, etc. A full gamut for everyone's needs. "

"Thank you for your hard work for community!!" Youth Outreach/Job Placement Specialist.

"This is a great help. I will pass it along to other local agencies that I think would like to get it in the future as well."

"Thank you for putting the special edition out around emergency preparedness and then having it back to back with your Resource Newsletter. They are both very helpful and I use them a lot."

"Is this newsletter helpful? YES!!!!!! I use it constantly and keep back issues in a file in my drawer to access when needed. I really appreciate the time and effort it takes."

- **Disasters and SILC Response:**

The SILC Disaster Planning Resource list continued to be helpful in 2011. The SILC Disaster Preparedness List focused on the specific needs of people living with disabilities helping to fill in the gaps. Towns posted the list on their websites. The help the Resource List provided is shown in the following examples:

- Per an Autism Family Support Specialist and Trainer: "Thank you so much for the resources! I have 4 statewide trainings in the upcoming months so I will pass it along. I will also send it out to 600 families."
- Another statewide organization helping people living with disabilities in NH posted on their website: "NH's Statewide Independent Living Council has developed a "must have" list of disaster emergency preparedness resources. It is important for everyone to be prepared for emergencies before they occur. When a family includes an individual with disabilities, additional planning may be needed."

- **Heat Wave**

In July New Hampshire experienced a deadly heat wave. People living with disabilities and older adults were deemed most vulnerable and at risk. As a New Hampshire older adults group wrote in their August Newsletter "There was an immediate need for distribution of critical information concerning cooling centers and resources dealing with extreme heat." NHSILC became a clearinghouse for information on dealing with the extreme heat. To ensure the information would be accessible to people who are Blind a person who is blind was asked to review the information. The majority of this work was done by people who in some cases had never met each other but worked together for a common purpose to help their fellow citizens. In some cases the persons were private citizens volunteering their time, putting aside other plans. Staff from the various agencies involved also put aside their work plans for the day to focus on this emergency. As the organization serving older adults wrote in their newsletter "activation of such systems can create momentum for even greater capacity and effect." NHSILC sent information statewide to: agencies and councils serving people with disabilities, community organizations, child and family agencies, older adult organizations, homeless organizations, culturally diverse organizations, veterans groups, and organizations, medical providers, mental health agencies, Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Health and Human Services, Developmental Disabilities Council, social service agencies, senior centers, people living with disabilities, and more.

These individuals and groups then forwarded the resources on. The information was posted on various websites.

- **Hurricane Irene**

In August of 2011 New Hampshire was hit with powerful hurricane Irene. The NHSILC was asked to collaborate on a resource list to help people with disabilities prepare for the Hurricane. The Developmental Disabilities Council along with the Red Cross and the NH Department of Health and Human Services fed the SILC information and resources. SILC members and staff gathered and updated additional information, putting it into an accessible, easy to use document. The list was developed and widely disseminated in under four hours. The list was forwarded put on a number of community and disability websites. The Hurricane Resource List was also forward to others in the New England Region by the Office of Regional Administrator, FEMA. Examples of feedback received were:

“Thank YOU for putting together the resource. Super Job! I've forwarded the list... to post on the Ready NH website and also on website used by local Emergency Management Directors.”

“I just wanted to thank you for sending out to us... the list of emergency information sites. I posted it on my website and referred, and was thanked for it.”

“A comprehensive one on hurricane preparedness in NH, especially for people with Disabilities. Thanks for your efforts for people with disabilities.”

- **Mental Health**

In October in response to the increase in the number of suicides in New Hampshire, the SILC collaborated with the Bureau of Behavioral Health, the New Hampshire Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and the Northern New England Geriatric Education Center on a Mental Health Resource List. Feedback received included:

“Thank you, for this very valuable information. I am very glad to have it. I am sure that the statistics for suicide, and overall rates of mental illness, depression, etc., have increased as a sign of the difficult times in which we live. Even more reason why this information are so valuable to those of us in the medical field. “

“I'm in graduate school to become a mental health counselor and this information is invaluable for me.”

“I passed your resource list on to a friend of mine who is a high school guidance counselor. She said it was a great resource and she is glad to have it. If you're not already passing it on to high schools, you might want to consider doing that.”

More information on the SILC including the taskforce and can be found at [www.silcnh.org](http://www.silcnh.org).

Contact information for the SILC is:  
Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)  
c/o Governor's Commission on Disability  
57 Regional Drive  
Concord, NH 03301  
603-271-0476 OR 1-800-852-3405 ext. 0476  
[paula.ninivaggi@nh.gov](mailto:paula.ninivaggi@nh.gov)

## **Client Assistance Program (CAP)**

- **CAP'S Mission And Purpose**

Congress authorized and funded a nationwide network of Client Assistance Programs in the 1984 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 98-221). The enactment of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-220) expanded the CAP's mission to include a partnership in the local One-Stop Board. The mission of the CAP is to inform and advise applicants and clients of programs funded by the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, and of all benefits under the Act. When requested and appropriate, the CAP provides individual advocacy for clients in their relationships with projects, programs and facilities, including the pursuit of legal, administrative or other appropriate remedies, to ensure the protection of their rights under the Act.

In New Hampshire, programs funded by the Act include the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR), Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI), Granite State Independent Living (GSIL) and various community rehabilitation programs. The CAP continues to provide its Guide to Vocational Rehabilitation Services, information and referral to facilitate access to services and benefits available in New Hampshire and to educate the public on Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The Federal Authority for the Client Assistance Program is 29 United States Code, Sections 20 and 112 of the Act.

- **Administering (Host) Agency**

In New Hampshire, the CAP is external to the BVR. The Executive Department of the State of New Hampshire houses the CAP within the Governor's Commission on Disability.

Since 1984, the CAP has worked within the Governor's Commission on Disability to improve the quality and delivery of services for individuals with disabilities in the State of New Hampshire.

## **Committees of the Commission**

### **Internal Committees**

The Commission has organized the following standing and ad-hoc committees:

#### **Architectural Barriers Committee (from RSA 275:C14). Purposes:**

- I. Establish, publish, and enforce a code for barrier-free design...
- II. Adopt such rules under RSA 541-A as may be necessary to enforce the provisions of this subdivision and the code for barrier-free design.
- III. Hold public hearings prior to the adoption of any rules by the committee in accordance with RSA 541-A.

**Legislative Committee** - follows and studies activities of the legislature as they pertain to people with disabilities in New Hampshire. The committee may advise or inform elected officials in matters pertaining to people with disabilities.

**ADA Coalition** - focuses on ways to make the state of New Hampshire as accessible as possible to all people with disabilities.

**Parking Committee** – works with a variety of stakeholders including law enforcement organization on issues related to availability of accessible parking and the enforcement of accessible parking rules and laws.

**Nominations Committee** - recruits and screens prospective candidates for membership on the Governor's Commission on Disability

**Telecommunications Committee** - Provides oversight and acts in an advisory capacity to the Technology Equipment Distribution Grant (currently with Northeast Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services) and Newline for the Blind (funds flow through GCD from PUC for both programs).

Schedules for committee meetings are posted on our website at [www.nh.gov/disability](http://www.nh.gov/disability) .

### **External Committees**

Staff and members of the Governor's Commission coordinate or are active participants on the following external committees:

- Medicaid Infrastructure Grant Committee
- Business Leadership Awards Planning Committee
- Traumatic Brain Injury and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Veterans Commission
- Statewide Rehabilitation Council
- Commission on Deafness and Hard of Hearing
- Quality Services Council
- Board of Directors of the Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire
- Wheelchair Health in Motion
- Statewide Coordinating Council for Transportation
- Emergency Preparedness Committee- coordinating; grant writing
- Statewide Independent Living Council
- Self Advocacy / Voting Committee
- NH Building Officials Association
- Medical Care Advisory Committee
- NH Emergency Preparedness Committee

## Statistics

**Technical Assistance and Information via Telephone: 1,062**

**Beyond The Barriers (Newspaper column): 37**

**GCD E-Newsletters (monthly): 10**

### **Events and Public Awareness Activities**

February 26 – Legislative Advocacy Training

April 12 – Exhibit 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual NH Youth Career Expo & Job Fair

April 13 and May 12 – NH State House – Meet & Greet with State Legislators

April 15 and 16 – National Federation of the Blind Annual State Affiliate Conference, Concord

April 16 – NH Dog Guide Users Conference, Concord

May 18 – NH Brain Injury Association 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Brain Injury & Stroke Conference, Manchester

May 26 – NH Conference on Aging – Older Americans: Connecting the Community, Manchester

June 23 – Governor John Lynch read a proclamation making June 16, 2011 “Service Animal Awareness Day” at the State House, Concord

July 26 – 21<sup>st</sup> ADA Celebration & the Governor’s Accessibility Awards – NH State House Executive Council Chambers

August 4 – Governor John H. Lynch proclaims August 7-13, “International Service Animal Awareness Week”

August 10 – Service Animal Awareness Day, Steeplegate Mall, Concord

August 12 thru 14 – Boston/Portsmouth Air Show, Portsmouth International Airport at Pease

Oct 13 – NH Employment Leadership Awards Breakfast & Conference

Oct 18 – Brain & Spinal Cord Injury Council Public Hearing at GSIL, Concord

Nov 2 – NH Coalition of Caring – Caregivers Conference, Windham

Dec 6 - New England ADA Center Conference

Dec 8 - NH Developmental Disabilities Council Open House, Concord

Dec 14 – NH Building Officials Association Annual Meeting, Concord

### **Trainings**

Feb 16 – Disability Awareness Day for Legislators GCD/MS Society (50-70 Attendees)

Feb 16 – GCD/SILC Mini Seminar, Emergency Preparedness (20 Attendees)

Feb 25 – Disability legislative Leadership Series – Part I (15 Attendees)

March 12 - Disability legislative Leadership Series – Part II (15 Attendees)

- March 17 – Overview of New ADA Regulations (11 Attendees)
- April 28 – Guidance on the 2010 ADA Standards for Access Design presented to the State Rehabilitation Council, Concord, NH by AB Specialist (12 Attendees)
- May 19 – Guidance on Changes to the ADA – Lakes Region Safety Officials Association, Meredith, presented by AB Specialist (6 Attendees)
- June 8 – Guidance on the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design on behalf of the Windham Planning Department presented by AB Specialist (15 Attendees)
- June 16 – AB Specialist attended & participated in 3 workshops at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Emergency Preparedness Conference, Manchester
- June 29 – Accessible Trails & Recreation Areas – Wolfeboro Multi-purpose Trail committee presented by AB Specialist (9 Attendees)
- September 16 – ADA Coalition Strategic Planning, Concord (14 Attendees)
- September 21 – GCD/ADA, Disability Awareness, Concord Lion's Club presented by John Richards (16 Attendees)
- September 22 - The Legislative Process: An Overview, Concord (35 Attendees)
- September 30 – NH Association for the Deaf State Conference, Concord, John Richards guest speaker (Disability Awareness & General ADA Info) (50 Attendees)
- Oct 3 – Endowment for Health, Concord – Carol Conforti-Adams (20 Attendees)
- Oct 14 – WHIM – Wheelchair Health in Motion, Greenfield (10 Attendees)
- Oct 20 – Transition Steps to Support Your Child as They Enter Adulthood, Sunapee presented by Carol Conforti-Adams, I&R Specialist (10 Attendees)
- Dec 9 – Why Wellness Is Still Important To Us, Concord presented by Carol Conforti-Adams, I&R Specialist

## Appendix A

### Governor's Commission on Disability – Strategic Plan

#### GOALS AND STRATEGIES

**Note – the goals are taken directly from RSA 275:C.**

**GOAL 1: Advise state government and the public on matters pertaining to living with a disability in New Hampshire.**

**PRIORITY: High and ongoing**

*Strategy A: Develop relationships with, support, and inform our elected officials on disability related matters.*

**PRIORITY: High and ongoing**

1. Provide information and resources to our constituents.
2. Testify as needed and requested at state legislative hearings.
3. Respond to specific requests for information regarding legislation of importance to the disability community.
4. Build relationships with elected officials.

*Strategy B: Gather relevant and meaningful data re: living with a disability in New Hampshire.*

1. Track information and referral call data to understand sources and numbers of requests for information.

**PRIORITY: Ongoing**

2. Develop and implement a feature on our website “telling our stories” to better inform the public what living with a disability is like.
3. Offer awards, commendation, recognition, and engage the media to promote awareness of those who excel in providing support to people with disabilities.

**PRIORITY: Ongoing thru the Governor's Accessibility Awards**

4. Research and write a “white paper” that attempts to address the question: What makes NH a state that is a good place for all people, including individuals with a full range

of disabilities to live, work, enjoy recreation as full participants in the state. Amend the factors to be considered: accessibility, supports, auxiliary aids and services and a service delivery system that meets the need of our citizens with intellectual disabilities, sensory impairments, physical disabilities, emotional/psychiatric disabilities, chemical and significant health impairments, including addiction. Part 2 of the white paper will answer the initial question for NH.)

5. Engage the media through public services announcements, human interest stories, and publications of awards and other recognition projects.
6. Ensure that all staff attend ADA trainings and teleconferences and that they attend refresher courses periodically.
7. Establish positions in-house to collect and document data on various disability related matters and/or topics discussed above. Once means of achieving some of the more involved goals have been determined, the scope and SJD can be created to justify the need for essential services.
8. Ensure that all committees, hearings, meetings, etc., comply with ADA Title II at all levels of state government for both aural and oral communication (i.e.: general funding pool for interpreters, CART reporters, or Assistive Listening Devices or providing auxiliary aids in all conference rooms utilized by state entities) and making us the first state in the nation to do so (making NH the primary example around the nation).
9. Complete the annual report to the Governor and legislature.

**PRIORITY:** To be completed by 1/31/12.

**GOAL 2: To provide informed advice to state government and the public about the adequacy of programs, plans and budgets for services for people with disabilities.**

*Strategy A: Support and encourage active GCD committees which address housing, finances, social opportunities, transportation and recreation for people with disabilities.*

1. Ensure a GCD presence on state committees and commissions addressing these issues.
2. Provide technical assistance RE: ADA and other related matters.

*Strategy B: Participate in emergency and disaster planning efforts specific to people with disabilities.*

**PRIORITY:** Ongoing



*Strategy C: Conduct educational seminars and trainings as needed and requested to heighten awareness of disability issues.*

1. Provide technical assistance and support as needed and requested.

**PRIORITY:** Ongoing

*Strategy D: Collaborate with the Secretary of State to ensure full accessibility to voting in NH.*

**GOAL 3: Encourage cooperation and collaboration amongst state government and private agencies to all services and supports to people with disabilities.**

*Strategy A: Collaborate with other state agencies and commissions regarding disability issues.*

1. Provide monthly e-newsletter re: disability related events.

**PRIORITY:** Ongoing

2. Collaborate on disability-related grant requests.

**PRIORITY:** Ongoing

3. Work with New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation on specific employment related initiatives.
4. Update state agencies and local government officials re: ADA and accessibility issues.
5. Provide demographic and disability related information as needed and requested regarding needed supports and services.

**GOAL 4: Provide information and education to the public about services and supports to persons with disabilities. Promote heightened awareness of disability issues.**

*Strategy A: Provide individual information and referral information.*

1. Respond to all information and referral calls within 24 hours with complete and accurate information.

**PRIORITY:** Ongoing

2. Track data re: information and referral call topics.

**PRIORITY: Ongoing -- we are averaging about 90 calls/month over the summer.**

*Strategy B: Speak publicly and present as requested to state entities and public groups.*

1. Offer interest based webinars and presentations to promulgate information.
2. Offer timely and accurate information regarding available federal benefits and programs and tax incentives for landlords and business owners.
3. Develop a speakers' bureau, possibly including Toastmasters group, for statewide presentations at civic, community & church groups.
4. Collaborate with the Bureau of Education and Training to hold ADA compliance training.
5. Ask the governor to present accessibility awards.

**PRIORITY: Completed**

6. Ask the Gov. to sign house Bill 398.

**PRIORITY: Completed**

*Strategy C: Offer information and education re: our legislative process.*

1. Provide at least two Legislative trainings yearly to advocates, professionals, and family members.

**PRIORITY: Next Scheduled for September 22.**

*Strategy D: Expand our outreach efforts.*

1. Expand e-newsletter mailing list to 1,000 subscribers.
2. Issue regular press releases regarding matters related to disability.
3. Collaborate with New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation and other disability agencies to recognize and encourage companies and groups who excel in supporting people with disabilities.

**Ongoing – Employment Leadership Awards Conference – October 13**

4. Retool, revamp and update our website to offer videos, timely information, links, and webinars.

**PRIORITY: High**

5. Develop and implement PSA's and other media to heighten disability awareness.

**GOAL 5: To research, create, and advocate for plans, programs, and policies which will serve the needs of people with disabilities, including a census of services and unmet needs.**

*Strategy A: Widen our scope and presence thru active participation with other disability specific groups.*

1. Attend at least six (6) disability related conferences per year.

**PRIORITY: Status uncertain – no funds are available.**

*Strategy B: Develop research and write "white papers" on specific topics of interest to the disability community.*

1. Develop and solicit a list of topics.
2. Draft "white papers" for widespread distribution; largely on our web site.

*Strategy C: Encourage people with disabilities to participate in leadership roles.*

1. Actively seek leaders in the disability community to fill positions on committees and subcommittees (See Goal 7 below.)

*Strategy D: Offer discussion and support groups, either in person or online, on relevant "cross-disability issues" e.g. adjustment to disability, coping with disability challenges, etc.*

1. Market and sponsor a preliminary "adjustment to disability" support group.

**GOAL 6: To annually report on the adequacy of the efforts of New Hampshire as a whole in supporting the needs of persons with disabilities.**

*Strategy A: Submit an annual report by December of each year.*

**PRIORITY: Very high**

**GOAL 7: Internally within the Governor's Commission on Disability:**

*Strategy A: Support and encourage all GCD members to be actively involved in at least one internal committee.*

1. Ensure that the GCD is represented for a "disability awareness focus" on all relevant state councils, commissions, task forces, etc.

*Strategy B: Support our Bylaws and Rules Committee to review/revisit our existing bylaws and rules.*

1. Call first meeting in May 2011.
2. Consider this committee functioning as a nominations committee and develop a process for same.
3. Review RSA 275:C with regard to the statutes and possible name change.

**PRIORITY: High; in conjunction with updating rules**

4. Clarify mechanism & system to identify and approve new prospective members.

*Strategy C: Support and encourage interns and volunteers to work for the GCD and thereby develop an interest in working with people with disabilities.*

1. Contact local social work and human services colleges.

**New intern from Workplace Success started early August**

*Strategy D: Enhance and strengthen the Governor's Commission on Disability membership.*

1. Develop an "orientation to GCD and disability issues in New Hampshire".
2. Select and implement an active "nominations committee" to identify & track terms of members; plan for vacancies & screen prospective candidates.
3. Finalize development of internal policy and procedures manual for all staff and the commission itself.

**PRIORITY: High**